



FEES

POLICY STATEMENT

Lake Mac Newy OOSH sets fees in accordance with its annual budget and biannual review, to meet the income required to develop and maintain a quality service for children and families. We strive to ensure that our service is affordable and accessible to families in our community. The Approved Provider ratifies the budget annually or as necessary and monitors it closely throughout the year.

The safety, well-being, and best interests of children are the paramount consideration in all decisions made by the service, including those relating to fees, payments, debt recovery and access to care.

Where there is a conflict between financial or operational considerations and a child's safety or well-being, the child's best interests will always take precedence.

Each of our services also has an additional, thorough Fees, Terms and Conditions Policy of which some of the Terms are listed below.

PROCEDURES:

Child Safe Financial Practices

The service recognises that financial practices can impact children's access to care and wellbeing.

- Decisions relating to fees, payment enforcement and debt recovery will be made with consideration to the potential impact on the child.
- The service will take reasonable steps to support families experiencing vulnerability or hardship to maintain continuity of care where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- No child will be excluded from care without consideration of their safety, wellbeing and any additional needs.
- Families will be treated with dignity and respect in all financial communications.

a) Enrolment Fee

An annual enrolment fee is applicable per family, per year. This fee is incorporated within the service's Fees, Terms and Conditions Policy.

b) Childcare Subsidy

Childcare Subsidy is the payment made by the Government to assist families with the costs of childcare. It is paid directly to the service and passed on to families as a fee reduction.

Families are required to make a co-contribution to their childcare fees and pay the service the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount (if applicable.)

The service is not directly involved in the calculation of a family's entitlements, this is a matter between the family and Centrelink.

The family is responsible for ensuring that Centrelink has processed their information and they have logged on through My Gov to confirm their enrolment at the service once we have created a CCS enrolment for your child. Please note, this process won't occur if you don't provide Centrelink Customer and Child reference numbers on enrolment.

Families should ensure they provide true and complete information to Centrelink for the purposes of claiming Childcare Subsidy. This is a legal requirement of families, and the provision of incorrect information may result in families incurring debts that need to be recovered later by Centrelink and/or the service.

In the event of a dispute between Centrelink and the family, or if Centrelink fails to make a subsidy



payment to the family, full fees are payable until such time as the subsidy is reinstated. The service administers CCS in accordance with the Family Assistance Law.

The service will ensure all Child Care Subsidy (CCS) claims and records are managed in accordance with Family Assistance Law, including prescribed and non-prescribed record keeping and reporting requirements.

Families will be issued with statements of fees charged and subsidy applied in line with legislative requirements.

c) Bookings and cancellations

Each family is expected to make bookings in advance, for the care sessions required. Bookings will only be accepted when families have completed the service's Enrolment Form in full.

Families wishing to cancel their child's place at the service are required to provide two (2) weeks written notice to the Nominated Supervisor/Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator, or they are liable to pay the equivalent of two weeks childcare full fees to the service.

Your child must attend their first booked session and their last booked session (if leaving the service) for CCS requirements. If this is not adhered to, you will be liable for full fees.

d) Vacation Care

- Please refer to your individual service's Fees/Terms & Conditions Policy for the daily fee. Please note, the costs on the program and booking form are before any CCS entitlements.
- Any bookings cancelled after the return date stated on the booking forms will still incur the full fee of the booking, as staffing, ratios, transport, activities and catering may already have been confirmed and arranged based on bookings received.
- Our vacation care sessions are 11.5 hours per day. Please be aware that if you exceed your fortnightly CCS allowable hours, you will be charged a full fee for any days/hours after this.

e) Absences

Fees are payable for family holidays and sick days if those days fall on a day that a child is booked into the service.

The service will provide families with information about approved and allowable absences and will adhere to the Childcare Subsidy System (CCSS) in relation to absences.

f) Service closure

No fee is charged while the service is closed over the Christmas/New Year period.

(f) Public Holiday

Public Holidays that fall in term time when permanent bookings have been made, fees are payable.

Public Holidays that fall in Vacation Care time when casual bookings have been made, fees are not payable.

g) Payment of Fees

Fees must be paid once invoiced, within the stated due date. A weekly statement of fees charged by the service will be provided to all families (Regulation 168). Fees are charged 2 weeks in advance (for weekly direct debit frequency) and 4 weeks in advance (for fortnightly direct debit frequency) as per Terms & Conditions Policy.

Families will be provided with a regular statement of fees charged, including details of sessions of care, payments received and any applicable Child Care Subsidy reductions.

Where fees become overdue, the service will work collaboratively with families to discuss payment options where appropriate. Failure to address unpaid fees may result in debt recovery action being



taken, which may include additional charges and discontinuation of care, unless the family has initiated and is adhering to a repayment schedule agreed upon with the Nominated Supervisor.

h) Debt recovery

The Approved Provider reserves the right to act to recover debts owing to the service, including the engagement of a debt collection agency where required.

Where a family owes overdue fees to the service, the child's place may be suspended until outstanding monies are paid, or both parties agree to and adhere to a payment plan.

The following process may occur in relation to overdue fees:

1. Families will be notified when fees become overdue.
2. Follow-up reminders may be provided regarding outstanding fees.
3. Families are encouraged to communicate with the service to discuss individual circumstances.
4. A payment plan may be negotiated where appropriate.
5. If a payment plan is not adhered to, further follow-up action may occur.
6. The Approved Provider reserves the right to engage the services of a debt collector, and the family may be responsible for fees associated with recovering the debt.

Any decision to suspend or discontinue care due to non-payment of fees will consider the impact on the child, including their safety, wellbeing and any known vulnerabilities, in line with the service's commitment to paramountcy.

Where a family is experiencing financial difficulty, they are encouraged to contact the service to discuss support options. Consideration may be given to payment plans, continuity of care and referral to Centrelink regarding eligibility for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS). Any arrangements made will be documented and reviewed as required.

i) Late collection fee

The service operates from 6.30am – 6.00pm. The Staff are unable to accept children in the service outside of these hours. Should children be present after the closing time, a late fee of \$10 for every 5 minutes per family after 6pm will be charged to the parent account and is not subject to CCS.

The hours and days of operation of the service will be displayed prominently within the service (Regulation 173).

In circumstances that are beyond the control of families, for example, weather and traffic accidents, which may result in them arriving late to collect their child, the Nominated Supervisor will have discretion to decide if families will be charged the late fee.

Families who are continually late collecting their children, without a valid reason, may jeopardise their child's place at the service. Should this be the case, the Nominated Supervisor will meet with the family to discuss this.

The service will apply discretion in circumstances where late collection is due to unforeseen or exceptional events, ensuring decisions are fair, reasonable and considerate of family circumstances.

j) Methods of Payment

Fees to be paid by:

- Direct Debit via Fat Zebra – your nominated account/credit card will be debited weekly or fortnightly at your discretion.

Families will be given a minimum of fourteen days' notice of any changes to the way in which fees are collected (Regulation 172).



k) Confidentiality

All information in relation to fees will be kept in strict confidence. Members of staff, management or the Approved Provider will not discuss individual names and details openly. Information will only be available to the nominated persons required to act, for example, to initiate debt recovery.

Families may access their own account records at any time, or particulars of fees will be available in writing to families, upon request.

l) Increase of fees

The fees are set by the Approved Provider to meet the budget for each financial year. There will be ongoing monitoring of the budget and, should it be necessary to amend fees, families will be given a minimum of fourteen days' notice of any fee increase (Regulation 172).

(m) Acknowledgement of responsibility to pay fees

Families are required to read and sign the service's Payment of Fees/Terms and Conditions Policy.

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
168, 170, 171, 172, 173	7.1.2, 7.1.3 Child Safe Standards 1, 3, 4 5,10	• Enrolment Form • Enrolment & Orientation Policy • Delivery & Collection of Children Policy • Confidentiality Policy • Governance & Management Policy • Child Protection Policy • Complaints and Grievances Policy • Fees, Terms and Conditions Policy	• Childcare Subsidy System • Fat Zebra Debit (OWNA) • Parent Handbook • Family Assistance Law • Child Care Subsidy Handbook • CCS System (OWNA)
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